

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-12 EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01
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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1783
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USNATO
USNMR SHAPE
USMISSION USUN
USDOCOLANDSOUTHEAST IZMIR
USDOCOSOQTH NAPLES
CINCEUR
AMCONSUL ADANA
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMCONSUL IZMIR
USICA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 3441

USICA FOR VOA/PN, PGM/RC, PGM/PPE, EU

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, MILL, MASS, TU, UR
SUBJECT: TURKISH DEFENSE MINISTER COMMENTS ON OGARKOV VISIT

REF: A) ANKARA 3321 (DTG 281318Z APR 78), B) ANKARA 3384
(DTG 031045Z MAY 78) (NOTAL)

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1. SUMMARY. AT CONCLUSION OF CHIEF OF SOVIET GENERAL STAFF
OGARKOV'S VISIT TO TURKEY APRIL 29, GOT DEFENSE MINISTER
HASAN ESAT ISIK SAID THAT SOVIETS WERE WILLING TO ENTER INTO
MILITARY COOPERATION WITH TURKEY. IN HIS PUBLIC STATEMENTS,
ISIK LEFT POSSIBILITY OF SUCH COOPERATION OPEN, BUT DISAVOWED
THERE IS ANY DIRECT CONNECTION BETWEEN REPEAL OF U.S. ARMS
EMBARGO AND TURKISH-SOVIET RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. ON APRIL 29, TURKISH DEFENSE MINISTER ANSWERED QUERIES OF PRESSMEN FOLLOWING CONCLUSION OF VISIT TO TURKEY BY CHIEF OF SOVIET GENERAL STAFF, MARSHAL NIKOLAI OGARKOV, AND A HIGH-LEVEL MILITARY DELEGATION (REF A). FOLLOWING ARE SALIENT EXCERPTS FROM ISIK'S MEETING WITH THE PRESS:

-- THE OGARKOV VISIT "WAS MADE UNDER CONDITIONS WHICH WOULD SUPPORT THE MUTUAL RESPECT AND CONFIDENCE WHICH WE WANT TO MAINTAIN BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES" AND CONSTITUTED "FRESH PROOF" THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND THE USSR ARE IN A STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT.

-- PURSUANT TO THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT, THE PROMOTION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN COUNTRIES HAVING DIFFERENT SOCIAL SYSTEMS IS THE "ONLY WAY OF ATTAINING WORLD-WIDE, LASTING PEACE."

-- IN THE MILITARY FIELD, COUNTRIES OF "DIFFERENT DEFENSE SYSTEMS" SHOULD ASSURE EACH OTHER THAT THEIR ARMED FORCES "HAVE NO AIM BUT THE DEFENSE OF THEIR COUNTRY" AND "CONTACTS AT THE MILITARY LEVEL WILL ASSIST IN (ATTAINMENT OF) THIS CONFIDENCE."

-- ON POSSIBLE MILITARY AID TO TURKEY FROM THE USSR, OGARKOV "REITERATED THAT THE USSR HAD NO OTHER FEELING THAN MUTUAL FRIENDSHIP AND GOOD NEIGHBORLINESS" AND, IN THIS CONTEXT, OGARKOV SAID THAT "SHOULD THE TURKISH ARMED FORCES NEED HELP, THE USSR WOULD EXTEND IT WITHIN ITS MEANS." (ISIK THEN COMMENTED THAT OGARKOV DID NOT GO FURTHER THAN THE FOREGOING IN HIS OFFER OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY. ISIK ALSO NOTED THAT CONFIDENTIAL

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THE GOT "DOES NOT FORGET" THAT THE USSR AND TURKEY ARE IN "SEPARATE DEFENSE GROUPS.")

-- THERE IS "NO LINK" BETWEEN CURRENT EFFORTS TO REPEAL THE U.S. ARMS EMBARGO AND TURKISH RELATIONS WITH THE USSR, JUST AS THERE IS A DE-LINKAGE OF THE CYPRUS PROBLEM FROM TURKISH-AMERICAN RELATIONS.

-- ON FUTURE MILITARY RELATIONS WITH THE USSR, "IT IS POSSIBLE TO STEP UP CONTACTS IN THE MILITARY FIELD AS OUR RELATIONS PROGRESS, BUT NO DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN AS YET." (IN FURTHER QUESTIONING, ISIK DENIED THAT "ANY CHANGES" IN U.S. INSTALLATIONS IN TURKEY WOULD RESULT FROM OGARKOV'S VISIT.)

-- ALTHOUGH THE OGARKOV TALKS WERE MAINLY LIMITED TO TURKISH-SOVIET RELATIONS, "WORLD CONDITIONS", DISARMAMENT AND THE NEUTRON BOMB WERE ALSO TOUCHED ON. (ISIK SAID FURTHER THAT THE MONTREUX CONVENTION AND THE PASSAGE OF SOVIET "AIRCRAFT CARRIERS" THROUGH THE STRAITS WERE NOT DEALT WITH IN OGARKOV'S TALKS WITH HIM, BUT SAID THESE SUBJECTS FELL WITHIN THE PURVIEW OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY.)

3. COMMENTS: ISIK'S COMMENTS, REPORTED IN LAST WEEK-END'S PRESS, ARE SOMEWHAT MORE POSITIVE ON PROSPECTS FOR TURKISH-SOVIET MILITARY CONTACTS AND COOPERATION THAN PREVIOUS

STATEMENTS OF GOT OFFICIALS CONCERNING SIGNIFICANCE AND
SUBSTANCE OF OGARKOV'S VISIT. IT SEEMS LIKELY FROM THE
FULSOME TREATMENT ACCORDED TO OGARKOV, AS WELL AS RECENT
TURKISH VISITS TO YUGOSLAVIA, BULGARIA, AND ROMANIA, THAT THE
GOT WISHES TO KEEP ITS PUBLIC RELATIONS AND FOREIGN POLICY
OPTIONS OPEN AS A HEDGE AGAINST U.S. CONGRESSIONAL ACTION
ON THE EMBARGO. AS NOTED IN OUR ANALYSIS OF ECEVIT'S VISIT
TO YUGOSLAVIA (REF B), THE CLEAR IMPRESSION THAT EMERGES
FROM OGARKOV'S VISIT AND THE FLURRY OF TOP-LEVEL POLITICAL
CONTACTS WITH TURKEY'S EASTERN NEIGHBORS IS THAT THE GOT
IS SENDING A SIGNAL TO US AND OTHERS THAT TURKEY DOES INDEED
HAVE FOREIGN POLICY OPTIONS AND IS ATTEMPTING TO COVER ALL
BETS.

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